



EU IN THE INDO-PACIFIC JEAN MONNET NETWORK

NEWSLETTER
ISSUE 5

PROJECT UPDATE

IN THIS ISSUE

- EUIP priority:
ocean
governance
- Focal location
spotlight:
Australia
- Recent outputs &
future events



We are rapidly approaching the halfway point of the EUIP Jean Monnet Network. It is encouraging to see the primary data starting to flow in from the 9 different focal locations. It is already clear that this will be a rich data set that will provide significant food for thought for the Delphi sessions we will commence in the next few months.

In late March, Martin Holland and I were fortunate enough to meet with the EU's special envoy to the Indo-Pacific, Richard Tibbels. Over the course of an hour, we shared our preliminary insights with Richard and took the opportunity to hear about some of the EU's latest Indo-Pacific initiatives and ideas.

In this issue of the newsletter, the priority area of ocean governance will be overviewed and a spotlight on the focal location of Australia is offered. We end with a round up of recent publications from project members and a list of future events.

Nāku noa, nā

Contact Us

-  +6433690390
-  nick.smith@canterbury.ac.nz
-  @EUIPJMN
-  www.canterbury.ac.nz/ncre/

Nicholas Ross Smith

EUIP PRIORITY: OCEAN GOVERNANCE

One of the key priority areas in the European Union's Indo-Pacific strategy is "ocean governance", particularly as maintaining a "rules based" Indo-Pacific is deemed one of the core overarching aims for the EU.

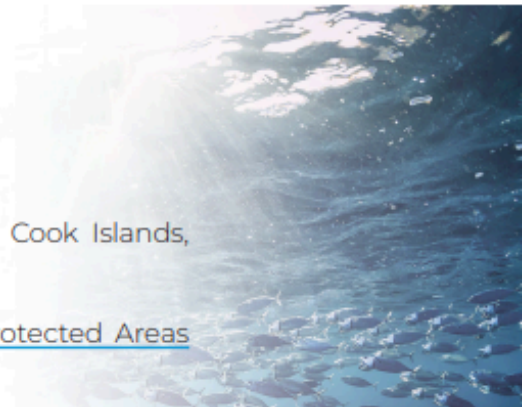
As stated by the European Commission, "the EU is a promoter of coordinated multilateral responses to global problems and an upholder of the rules-based international system. The ocean requires a collective approach based on the provisions of international law and with the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) at its core. Through its political and diplomatic leverage, upholding fundamental rights and promoting sustainable development in line with the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the EU is as a driving force in international negotiations, fora and processes for a sustainable ocean governance."

With regards to the Indo-Pacific, the EU's most recent Indo-Pacific Strategy publication lists the following for ocean governance:

Ocean governance

to ensure the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity

- [Adoption of the UN Treaty of the High Seas](#);
- New [Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreements](#) agreed with Cook Islands, Madagascar, and Kiribati;
- Support to the creation of a representative system of [Marine Protected Areas around Antarctica](#);
- The EU is currently preparing to launch the "[Sustainable Western Indian Ocean](#)" (SWIOP) programme, which will include Djibouti, Kenya, Somalia, Tanzania, Mozambique, Mauritius, Seychelles, Madagascar and Comoros;
- Promote the [sustainable management of marine resources](#) through Regional Fisheries Management Organisations, and the continuous work done in the fight against Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated fishing.



Unsurprisingly, in the EUIP's preliminary findings, there is a strong desire amongst Indo-Pacific states for the EU to play a positive and pro-active role in the realm of ocean governance. For example, for New Zealand, it was deemed the most crucial of the seven priority areas.

OCEAN GOVERNANCE IN PRACTICE: SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES PARTNERSHIPS

One of the key ocean governance challenges in the Indo-Pacific concerns the threat of overfishing and promoting more sustainable fisheries industries is a key aspect of the EU's Indo-Pacific Strategy.

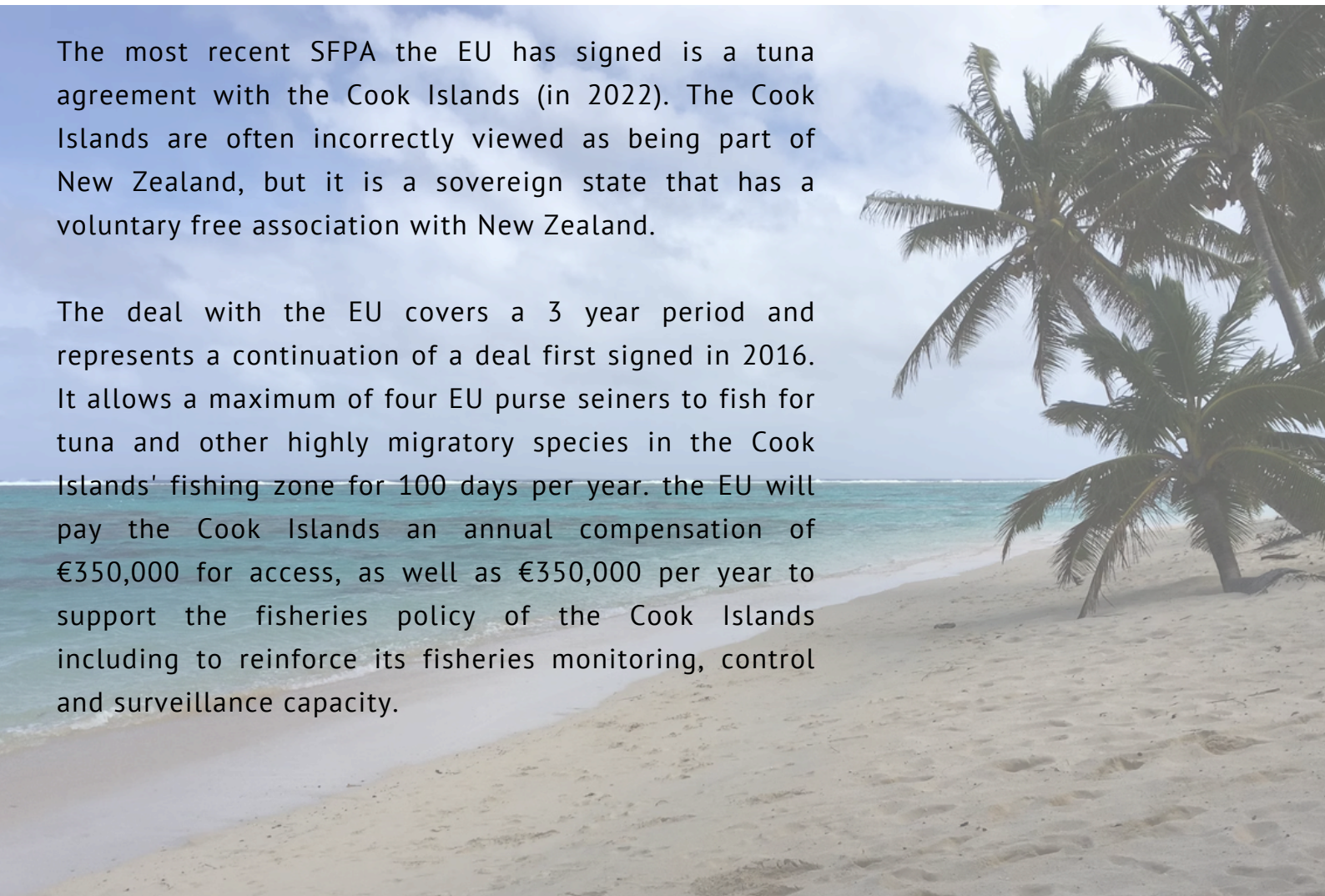
“Sustainable fisheries partnership agreements (SFPAs) are tools for financial and technical support by the EU to develop the fisheries sector and improve fisheries governance together with partner countries in exchange for fishing rights in their waters. SFPAs integrate other EU policies including trade, development, environment and external action, thus contributing to blue growth, food security, human rights and regional stability.”

There are two main types of agreement:

- Tuna agreements – allow EU vessels to pursue migrating tuna stocks as they move along the shores of Africa and through the Indian Ocean
- Mixed agreements – provide access to a wide range of fish stocks in the partner country's EEZ.

The most recent SFPA the EU has signed is a tuna agreement with the Cook Islands (in 2022). The Cook Islands are often incorrectly viewed as being part of New Zealand, but it is a sovereign state that has a voluntary free association with New Zealand.

The deal with the EU covers a 3 year period and represents a continuation of a deal first signed in 2016. It allows a maximum of four EU purse seiners to fish for tuna and other highly migratory species in the Cook Islands' fishing zone for 100 days per year. The EU will pay the Cook Islands an annual compensation of €350,000 for access, as well as €350,000 per year to support the fisheries policy of the Cook Islands including to reinforce its fisheries monitoring, control and surveillance capacity.



FOCAL LOCATION SPOTLIGHT: AUSTRALIA



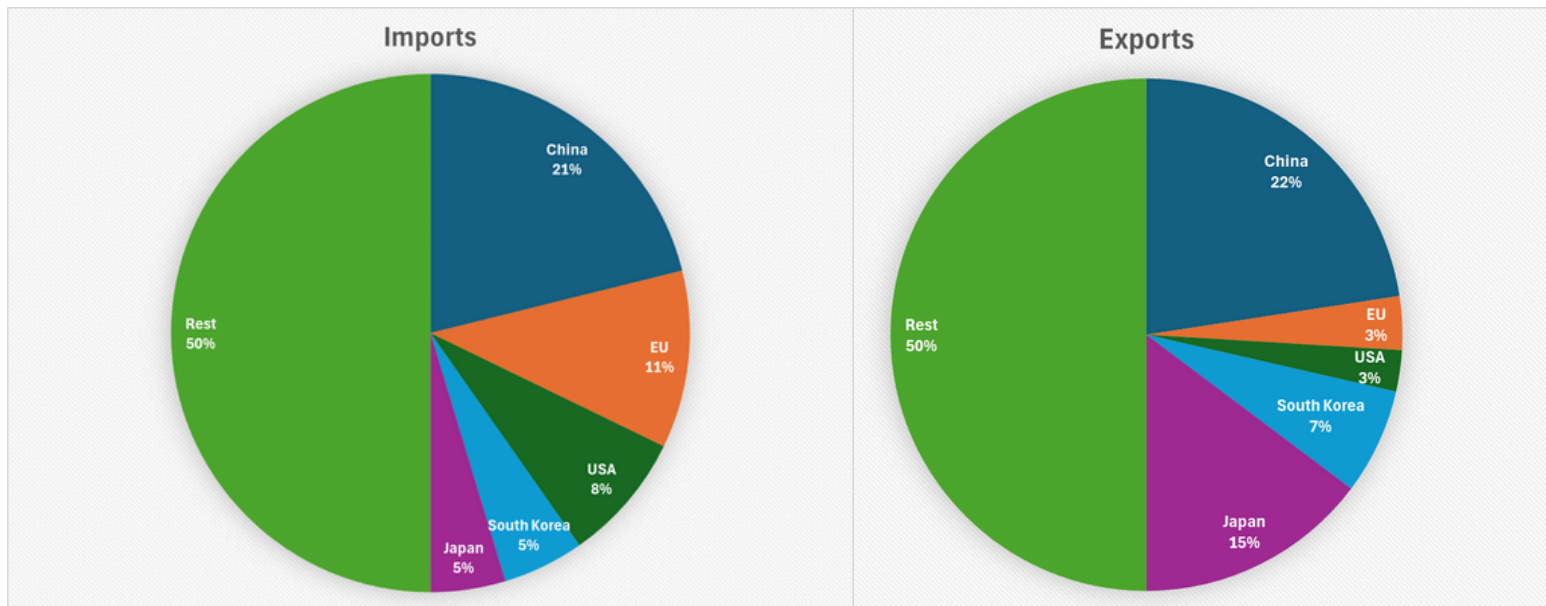
Australia is described frequently as a ‘like-minded’ partner for the European Union in the Indo-Pacific, yet it has not been an easy path. When the United Kingdom joined the European Economic Community in 1974, the impact on the Australian economy, particularly agricultural exports, was significant. Australia found new markets in Asia, and rebounded spectacularly, but the resentment remained until 2007, when a new Labor Government, led by Kevin Rudd, was elected.

For the first time, an Australian Prime Minister visited Brussels and Australia belatedly signed the Kyoto Protocol. Both these initiatives led European leaders to think much more favourably about Australia. This accelerated tentative steps towards partnership which had been in a Wine Agreement (in which Australia agreed to remove European place names from labels on Australian wine, and to establish their own geographical wine markers), and an agreement to collaborate on Science and Research.

The momentum towards partnership increased when a second Labor Prime Minister, Julia Gillard, attended an Asia Europe Meeting (ASEM) Leaders’ Summit in Brussels in 2010. Prime Minister Gillard took this opportunity to initiate steps towards a Treaty-level Agreement between Australia and the European Union (EU). An earlier Framework Agreement had broadened the scope for cooperation but a Treaty-level agreement would provide a much stronger foundation for extending the opportunities for collaboration.

However, a conservative Liberal Government took office in 2013, just at the point where the EU was ramping up its diplomacy in support of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, and for the Climate Convention that was planned for Paris in November 2015. The EU Delegation in Canberra worked closely to persuade the Australian Government to support both proposals, while at the same time, the Australian Foreign Minister, Julie Bishop, developed a positive working relationship with the EU’s High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security. The Framework Agreement, consolidating the legal foundation for closer relations, was signed in 2017.

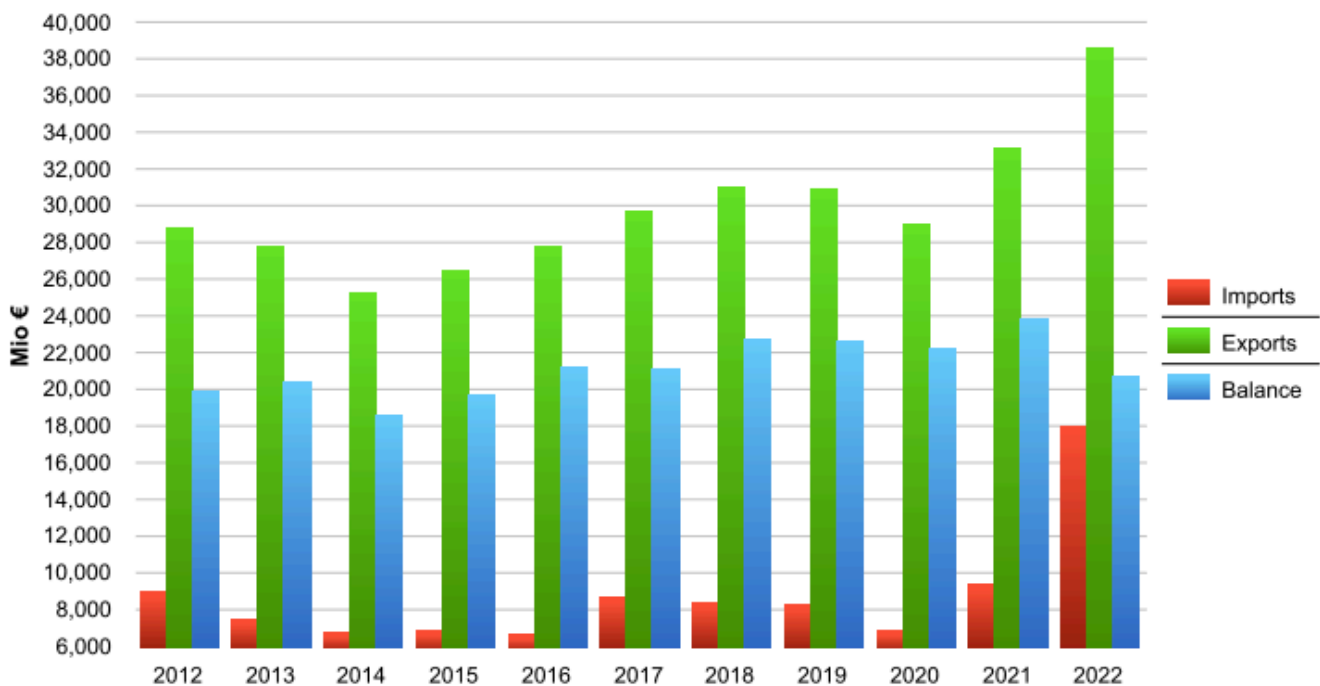
AUSTRALIA'S TWO-WAY TRADE



European Union, Trade with Australia

Total goods: EU Trade flows and balance, annual data 2012 - 2022

Source Eurostat Comext - Statistical regime 4



EU AUSTRALIA FTA NEGOTIATIONS

Negotiations started in 2018 and there have been 15 rounds with the last being in April 2023.

The EU forecasts that with an FTA, trade in goods between Australia and the EU would increase by up to 33% and services by up to 8%.

This could add up to €3.9bn to the EU's GDP by 2030.

AUSTRALIA AND THE EU: NEGOTIATING AN FTA AT A TIME OF INDO-PACIFIC UNCERTAINTY

Momentum increased for negotiations for a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between Australia and the EU in the late-2010s. Malcom Turnbull had become the Liberal Government's Prime Minister on a platform of promoting innovation and an 'agile' economy and society. Andrew Robb, the Trade Minister, described an FTA with the EU as Australia's missing link in its portfolio of trade agreements. Negotiations commenced formally in 2018 amidst considerable optimism that an 'ambitious' agreement could be reached reasonably quickly, and indeed, the early progress was very encouraging.

However, a third Liberal Government Prime Minister, Scott Morrison, stunned European and many Australian colleagues alike in October 2021, when he announced AUKUS, a joint security arrangement amongst Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States. Australia would gain nuclear equipped submarines, but Morrison announced also the cancellation of a contract with the French to provide nuclear-powered submarines. This was a very serious moment. President Macron expressed a distinct lack of trust with the Australian Prime Minister and the EU suspended the trade negotiations.

Unfortunately, AUKUS was announced on the same day that the EU's High Representative, Josep Borrell, released the EU's Indo-Pacific Strategy, distracting from the impact which the EU had hoped that the Strategy would have with its Indo-Pacific partners. Tension remained until a new Labor Government was elected in Australia in May 2022.

Early meetings between Prime Minister Albanese and President Macron, and European Commission President were productive and a much stronger commitment to climate action augured well for Australia and the EU to resume closer collaboration. Apart from resumption of concerted efforts to reach a trade deal, there were also new opportunities emerging around city-to-city collaboration, energy policy, critical minerals, and also on space research. On security matters, there is willing cooperation on cybersecurity and human security, and both partners have an ambivalent relationship with China. Trade with China is crucial for both, but the military tensions between the US and China, not least over the South China Seas and Taiwan have contributed to geopolitical uncertainty.

AUSTRALIA AND THE EU: CONCLUDING REMARKS

Issues in the EU-Australia relationship continue to suggest that there are still points of difference and that the lengthy period of distrust continues to undermine the 'like-mindedness' connection. The EU is very keen for Australia to become associated with Horizon Europe (as New Zealand has done already), but there is still some reluctance on the part of Australia. Just when it seemed as though a trade deal was imminent, the partners could not agree on their final positions in relation to market access, and negotiations were suspended, possibly until mid-2025. In general, great progress had been made on a comprehensive agreement that would have been path-breaking, especially in relation to digital economy issues. It seems that in the end, neither side could quite see the other's position on one very specific topic.

Nevertheless, the platform is there for close collaboration on the EU's Indo-Pacific Strategy. The Framework Agreement is in place, there is increasing cooperation on climate action, and ocean governance is a very significant issue for Australia, as well as for France in the Pacific. While security concerns linger, the shared trade agenda means that both parties are committed strongly to maintaining an environment that privileges an open and secure trading environment in the Indo-Pacific. A new Policy Dialogue and Public Diplomacy action from 2024-27 will provide for ongoing exchanges amongst relevant officers in all of the areas covered by the Indo-Pacific Strategy. If a trade deal is completed and greater interest is shown by Australia in Horizon Europe, the next 5-10 years promise to be a period of very active collaboration.



THE AUSTRALIA RESEARCH TEAM



Anne McNaughton

Senior Lecturer

ANU College of Law

Australian National University



Katarzyna Kwapisz Williams

Deputy Director

Centre for European Studies

Australian National University



Bruce Wilson

Professor

European Union Centre of Excellence

RMIT



Emma Shortis

Senior Researcher

International & Security Affairs

The Australia Institute



Juan Luis Manfredi Sánchez

Prince of Asturias Distinguished Professor

School of Foreign Service

Georgetown University



Carlos González-Villa

Professor

CENTRO DE ESTUDIOS EUROPEOS

Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha

RECENT OUTPUTS FROM PROJECT MEMBERS

Commentaries

Reiterer, Michael. 2024. 'NATO and the Republic of Korea: The AP4 in the Indo-Pacific', 38 *North*.

Blarel, Nicholas and Niels van Willigen. 2024. 'Strategic Communication in the IndoPacific: Signalling EU Naval Commitment to the Region', *The Hague Centre for Strategic Studies*.

Serena, Kelly. 2024 'EU in the Indo-Pacific Cooperation: Opportunities and Constraints', *Kwentuhan*

Smith, Nicholas Ross. 2024. 'How NZ can truly be independent in foreign policy', *Newsroom*.

Smith, Nicholas Ross and Tracey Fallon. 2024. 'China Should Be Wary of the Trap of History', *The Diplomat*.

FUTURE EVENTS

Logo: UCLM Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha

SEMINARIO INTERNACIONAL
**LA POLÍTICA DEL INTERREGNO:
Conversaciones en la multipolaridad**

29 de abril de 2024, 10:00-12:00 h.
Sala de Prensa
Facultad de Ciencias Jurídicas y Sociales de Toledo

**China's foreign policy orientations
under Xi Jinping**

Ponente: Alice Ekman
European Union Institute for Security Studies

Comentaristas:
Nicholas Smith
Universidad de Canterbury
Bernardo Navazo López
Universidad Carlos III de Madrid

Presentador: Carlos González-Villa
Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha

Logos: Centro de Estudios Europeos Luis Ortega Álvarez, Cortes de Castilla-La Mancha, GrandContinent, EU IP

Logo: EUSA ASIA PACIFIC european union studies association

CALL FOR PAPERS

EUSAAP Conference 2024

Revisiting EU - Asia Pacific Relations

Yogyakarta, 20-21 May 2024

Timeline

- Call for papers closing : 29 February 2024
- Applicants notified of paper acceptance: mid-March 2024
- Participants' acceptance: 10 calendar days after post-acceptance notification sent
- Full paper submission (required): 01 May 2024
- Guest registration closing: 01 May 2024

Further information

Conference Website

Indonesian Participants



**Funded by
the European Union**